Centre at SHAR, Liquid Propulsion Systems Centre and Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question Hour is over.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO STARRED QUESTIONS

Target of broadband internet

*129. SHRI R.K. ANAND: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India has fallen short of its target of reaching 3 million subscriber base in broadband internet; and

(b) if so, whether it is due to turf war between internet service providers, bandwidth providers and telecom operators offering last mile connectivity?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI DAYANIDHI MARAN) (a) Government has envisaged 3 million broadband subscribers by the end of 2005. As per available information, the total number of broadband internet subscribers in the country, as on 31.10.2005, is around 7.1 lakhs.

(b) Internet Service Providers were allowed to access the subscribers on optical fibre cable and microwave in local area. Later on, in April, 2004, permission to lay underground copper cable to offer last mile connectivity was also granted.

Further, access providers are free to enter into mutually agreed arrangements for utilization of available copper loop for expansion of broadband services.

As per the recent announcement of the Government, National Long Distance and International Long Distance Service Providers (Bandwidth providers) are also permitted to access subscribers directly for provisioning of leased circuits.

Therefore, it will not be correct to conclude that the target of reaching 3-million subscriber base in broadband internet is affected by turf war between Internet Service Providers, Bandwidth Providers and Telecom Operators Offering last mile connectivity.